

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 325.0253PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION	See Form PCT/IPEA/416
International application No. PCT/US04/26926	International filing date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 18 August 2004 (18.08.2004)	Priority date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 20 January 2004 (20.01.2004)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC IPC(7): B01D 53/14 and US Cl.: 95/187, 223, 235; 96/234; 423/220		
Applicant FLUOR TECHNOLOGIES CORPORATION		

1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.

3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:

a. ☒ (*sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau*) a total of 3 sheets, as follows:

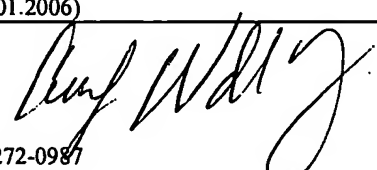
☐ sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).

☐ sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.

b. ☐ (*sent to the International Bureau only*) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) _____, containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in electronic form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).

4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the report
- ☐ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☐ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 03 November 2005 (03.11.2005)	Date of completion of this report 19 January 2006 (19.01.2006)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/ US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: IPEA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201	Authorized officer Frank M. Lawrence  Telephone No. 571-272-0987

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.

PCT/US04/26926

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the language, this report is based on:

- ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed.
- ☐ a translation of the international application into English, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
- ☐ international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
 - ☐ publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4(a))
 - ☐ international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2(a) and/or 55.3(a))

2. With regard to the elements of the international application, this report is based on (*replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report*):

- ☐ the international application as originally filed/furnished
- ☒ the description:
pages 1-17 as originally filed/furnished
pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____
pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____
- ☒ the claims:
pages NONE as originally filed/furnished
pages* 18-20 as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19
pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____
pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____
- ☒ the drawings:
pages 1/7-7/7 as originally filed/furnished
pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____
pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____
- ☐ a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.

3. ☒ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages _____
- ☒ the claims, Nos. 14
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs _____
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*): _____
- ☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (*specify*): _____

4. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

- ☐ the description, pages _____
- ☐ the claims, Nos. _____
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs _____
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*): _____
- ☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (*specify*): _____

* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded."

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/US04/26926**Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement****1. Statement**

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>1-13, 15-17</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Inventive Step (IS)	Claims <u>1-13, 15-17</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Industrial Applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-13, 15-17</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. Citations and Explanations (Rule 70.7)

Claims 1-13 and 15-17 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a plant comprising a first absorber coupled to a regenerator, wherein the absorber is configured to promote absorption of H₂S using a solvent and wherein the regenerator is configured to promote formation of a H₂S-rich gas from the solvent, a second absorber coupled to the regenerator, wherein a portion of the H₂S-rich gas is fed to the second absorber to increase a H₂S concentration in the H₂S-rich gas, and wherein the first and second absorbers are configured to produce an overhead product that is enriched in CO₂ and depleted in H₂S. The prior art also does not teach or fairly suggest a process for carrying out the separation, wherein the step of combining the first and second H₂S-enriched solvents comprises feeding at least part of the first solvent into the second absorber, or comprising a step of feeding a second portion of the H₂S-rich product gas to a Claus plant.

Claims 1-13 and 15-17 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(4), and thus have industrial applicability because the subject matter claimed can be made or used in industry.

----- NEW CITATIONS -----